

V. REMARKS

Claims 1 and 3-13 are provisionally rejected on the grounds of non-statutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-10 of co-pending Application No. 10/697,027. A Terminal Disclaimer is filed herewith to obviate the rejection.

Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-5 are rejected under 35 USC 102 (b) as being anticipated by Takemoto et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,472,195). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Takemoto discloses a system for displaying occurrence of an event at a game machine island having at least one game machine row that includes a plurality of game machines placed side by side. The display system comprises a dome display having a display area provided along the game machine row of the game machine island for displaying in the display area and a display controller for controlling the operation of the dome display. A plurality of display units are distributed into those positioned to the left, when viewed facing the game machine row, and those positioned to the right, with the position corresponding to the position of a game machine when an event occurs as reference. The display units positioned to the left are made to display in a display mode representing directionality from the left end to the reference position and the display units positioned to the right are made to display in a display mode representing directionality from the right end to the reference position.

Claim 1, as amended, is directed to a gaming machine that includes a variable display device and an electric display device. Claim 1 recites that the variable display device is in a form of a plurality of reels operative for rotating about a common axis of rotation with each reel having a plurality of symbols extending about an outer periphery of the reel and the electric display device is disposed in front of the variable display device in a forward direction. Claim 1 also recites that the electric display device includes a flat electric display panel for displaying an image, the electric display

having a flat back face, a light guiding plate and an illumination device. Further, claim 1 recites that the light guiding plate is disposed apart from yet adjacent to the back face and between the electric display panel and the variable display device with the light guiding plate having an opposing pair of flat surfaces and a plurality of contiguous side faces extending therebetween and peripherally about the pair of flat surfaces. Also, claim 1 recites that the light guiding plate is operative for guiding light entered from at least one side face thereof to the back face of the electric display panel so as to irradiate the light with the light guiding plate having a plurality of openings corresponding to the plurality of reels for showing forward-most ones of the symbols therethrough. Additionally, claim 1 recites that the illumination device illuminates the electric display panel from therebehind and the illumination device includes a plurality of light emitting diodes aligned continuously along and adjacent to the at least one side face of the light guiding plate.

It is respectfully submitted that the rejection is improper because the applied art fails to teach each and every element of claim 1 as amended. Specifically, it is respectfully submitted that the applied art fails to teach the variable display device is in a form of a plurality of reels operative for rotating about a common axis of rotation with each reel having a plurality of symbols extending about an outer periphery of the reel and the electric display device is disposed in front of the variable display device in a forward direction. Furthermore, it is respectfully submitted that the applied art also fails to teach that the electric display device includes a flat electric display panel for displaying an image with the electric display having a flat back face, a light guiding plate and an illumination device with light guiding plate being disposed apart from yet adjacent to the back face and between the electric display panel and the variable display device and with the light guiding plate having an opposing pair of flat surfaces and a plurality of contiguous side faces extending therebetween and peripherally about the pair of flat surfaces. Additionally, it is respectfully submitted that the applied art also fails to teach that the light guiding plate is operative for guiding light entered from at least one side face thereof to the back face of the electric display panel so as to irradiate the light with the light guiding plate having a plurality of openings

corresponding to the plurality of reels for showing forward-most ones of the symbols therethrough. Also, it is respectfully submitted that the applied art also fails to teach that the illumination device illuminates the electric display panel from therebehind and the illumination device includes a plurality of light emitting diodes aligned continuously along and adjacent to the at least one side face of the light guiding plate. As a result, in view of the combination of these features, claim 1 is allowable over the applied art.

Claim 11 depends from claim 1 and includes all of the features of claim 1. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the dependent claim is allowable at least for the reasons claim 1 is allowable as well as for the features it recites.

Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 3-10 and 12-13 are rejected under 35 USC 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Takemoto as applied to claims 1 and 11 and further in view of Loose et al. (GB EP 1,260,928). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Loose teaches a wheel spinning slot machine with a superimposed video image. The slot machine includes immortality of mechanical rotatable wheels and a video display. The reels are rotated and stopped to randomly placed symbols on the reels in visual association with a display area. The video display provides a video image superimposed on the reels the video image may be interactive with the reels and include graphics such as payout values, a patent table or instructional information.

Claim 3, as amended, is directed to a gaming machine that includes a variable display device in a form of a plurality of reels operative for rotating about a common axis of rotation with each reel having a plurality of symbols extending about an outer periphery of the reel and an electric display device disposed in front of the variable display device in a forward direction. Claim 3 recites that the electric display device includes a flat electric display panel for displaying an image, the electric display having a flat back face, a flat diffusion sheet disposed apart from yet adjacent to the back face of the electric panel with the diffusion sheet having a plurality of diffusion sheet openings extending through the diffusion sheet and corresponding to the plurality of reels for showing forward-most respective ones of the symbols therethrough and an

illumination device. Claim 3 recites that the illumination device includes a flat plate-shaped board and a plurality of light emitting diodes provided in a plurality of rows and columns to form a matrix on a surface of the plate-shaped board with the plurality of light emitting diodes opposing the back face of the diffusion sheet. Also, claim 3 recites that the illumination device has a plurality of illumination device openings extending through the surface of the plate-shaped board and corresponding to the plurality of diffusion sheet openings and the plurality of reels for showing forward-most ones of the symbols therethrough. Also, claim 3 recites that the diffusion sheet is disposed between the electric display panel and the illumination device and the illumination device is disposed between the diffusion sheet and the variable display device.

It is respectfully submitted that none of the applied art, alone or in combination, teaches or suggests the features of claim 3 as amended. Specifically, it is respectfully submitted that the applied art, alone or in combination, fails to teach or suggest that the electric display device includes a flat electric display panel for displaying an image with the electric display panel having a flat back face, a flat diffusion sheet disposed apart from yet adjacent to the back face of the electric panel with the diffusion sheet having a plurality of diffusion sheet openings extending through the diffusion sheet and corresponding to the plurality of reels for showing forward-most respective ones of the symbols therethrough and an illumination device. Furthermore, it is respectfully submitted that the applied art also fails to teach or suggest that the illumination device includes a flat plate-shaped board and a plurality of light emitting diodes provided in a plurality of rows and columns to form a matrix on a surface of the plate-shaped board with the plurality of light emitting diodes opposing the back face of the diffusion sheet with the illumination device having a plurality of illumination device openings extending through the surface of the plate-shaped board and corresponding to the plurality of diffusion sheet openings and the plurality of reels for showing forward-most ones of the symbols therethrough. Also, it is respectfully submitted that the applied art also fails to teach or suggest that the diffusion sheet is disposed between the electric display panel and the illumination device and the illumination device is disposed

between the diffusion sheet and the variable display device. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that one of ordinary skill in the art would not be motivated to combine the features of the applied art because such combination would not result in the claimed invention. As a result, it is respectfully submitted that claim 3 is allowable over the applied art.

Claim 4, as amended, is directed to a game machine that includes a variable display device in a form of a plurality of reels operative for rotating about a common axis of rotation with each reel having a plurality of symbols extending about an outer periphery of the reel and an electric display device disposed in front of the variable display device in a forward direction. Claim 4 recites that the electric display device includes:

- a flat electric display panel for displaying an image with the electric display having a flat back face,

- a light guide plate disposed apart from yet adjacent to the back face of the electric display panel and between the electric display panel and the variable display device with the light guiding plate having an opposing pair of flat surfaces and a plurality of contiguous side faces extending therebetween and peripherally about the pair of flat surfaces, with the light guiding plate operative for guiding light entered from at least one side face thereof to the back face of the electric display panel so as to irradiate the light and with the light guiding plate having a plurality of light guiding plate openings corresponding to the plurality of reels for showing forward-most ones of the symbols therethrough,

- an illumination device illuminating the electric display panel from therebehind with the illumination device including a plurality of light emitting diodes aligned continuously along and adjacent to the at least one side face of the light guide plate, and

- a reflection plate disposed between the variable display device and the light guiding plate for reflecting light emitted from the emitting diodes on the light guide plate to the electric display panel with the reflection plate having a plurality of reflection

plate openings extending therethrough and corresponding to the plurality of light guiding plate openings and the plurality of reels for showing forward-most ones of the symbols therethrough.

It is respectfully submitted that none of the applied art, alone or in combination, teaches or suggests the features of claim 4 as amended. Specifically, it is respectfully submitted that the applied art, alone or in combination, fails to teach or suggest the flat electric display panel, the light guide plate, the illumination device and the reflection device as claimed and recited immediately above. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that one of ordinary skill in the art would not be motivated to combine the features of the applied art because such combination would not result in the claimed invention. As a result, it is respectfully submitted that claim 4 is allowable over the applied art.

Claim 8 depends from claim 1 and includes all of the features of claim 1. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the dependent claim is allowable at least for the reasons claim 1 is allowable as well as for the features it recites.

Claims 5-7, 10 and 13 depend from claim 4 and includes all of the features of claim 4. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the dependent claims are allowable at least for the reason claim 4 is allowable as well as for the features they recite. For instance, claim 5 recites that the gaming machine further includes a diffusion sheet with the plurality of light emitting diodes opposing a back face of the diffusion sheet. Claim 6 recites about the gaming machine further includes a diffusion sheet with the diffusion sheet being disposed between the electric display panel and the illumination device. Claim 7 recites that the gaming machine further includes a diffusion sheet with the plurality of light emitting diodes opposing a back face of the diffusion sheet and the diffusion sheet being disposed between the electric display panel and the illumination device. At least for these additional reasons, it is respectfully submitted that claims 5-7 are allowable over the applied art.

Claims 9 and 12 depend from claim 3 and include all of the features of claim 3. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the dependent claims are allowable at least for the reason claim 3 is allowable as well as for the features they recite.

Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Further, Applicants assert that there are also reasons other than those set forth above why the pending claims are patentable. Applicants hereby reserve the right to submit those other reasons and to argue for the patentability of claims not explicitly addressed herein in future papers.

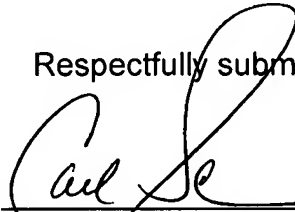
In view of the foregoing, reconsideration of the application and allowance of the pending claims are respectfully requested. Should the Examiner believe anything further is desirable in order to place the application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' representative at the telephone number listed below.

Should additional fees be necessary in connection with the filing of this paper or if a Petition for Extension of Time is required for timely acceptance of the same, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 18-0013 for any such fees and Applicant(s) hereby petition for such extension of time.

Respectfully submitted,

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Enclosure(s): Amendment Transmittal
 Petition for Extension of Time (one month)
 Terminal Disclaimer

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